



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1005MO-1 for Republic R3 Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	5
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant, a consortium of six LEAs, established the Mobile Mastery Consortium (MMC) whose goals include "professional learning in understanding and implementing personalized learning environments in classrooms, the Common Core State Standards, and 21st Century Skills." Students will access information and learning through individualized learning maps based in their interests. Ultimately the goal is to have "learning occur anywhere students and teachers make connections." Data and a technology infrastructure are essential to these efforts. Professional development will be focused by the goals noted in this section..</p> <p>However, there is no information provided in this section of the narrative to determine if the reform vision builds on previous work in the four core educational assurance area.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The consortium formed as a result of a State wide webinar focused on school districts that desired working collaboratively to advance "teaching and learning that would directly improve student achievement and educator effectiveness." Six districts* ultimately decided that they were at a level of readiness to participate in such an effort. The schools participating in the grant activities will be school sites under the jurisdiction of the following six LEAs: Independence School District, Raymore-Peculiar School District, Republic RIII School District, Stockton School District, West Plains School District, and Kelso School District formed the MMC. They also determined to involve all schools and all students in the RTTT program. The rationale for including all schools in all LEAs is not clarified.</p> <p>Self-selection is a necessary component for participation. However, inclusion of a qualifying standard(s) or a rubric that is more objective would enhance selection criteria. The narrative in this section does not suggest there were objective criteria for MMC participation.</p> <p>The application includes the total number of participating students as well as those of low-income and high needs</p> <p>Given the particulars of this geographic context a mid-range score is given in spite of the gaps noted.</p> <p>* The narrative alternately describes the Consortium as involving six districts (A) (1), eight districts (B) (2) and five districts (Chart, (A) (4) (d).</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>MMC's theory of change is commended for taking into account research findings regarding readiness and the positive influence of early adopters. The narrative refers to "allowing for the tipping point" so that others will join willingly in the change</p>		

efforts. This approach is commendable. Personalized coaching coupled with web supports appears to be the primary, perhaps only, training mode planned for the first year. Change however is rarely brought about through a single method of intervention.

Professional development is best if it is multi-faceted and tiered so as to have the potential for meeting the varying needs and skill levels of the learners, in this case, educators.

The inclusion, as per the budget, of large scale conferences can be helpful in ensuring spread. However, this is only possible if there is follow up at the home site that is focused and individualized to the specific context. This reviewer did not find indication in the narrative that this is planned.

A train the trainers model for the final year of the grant is appropriate for sustainability purposes.

A medium low score is given to this section. It appears unlikely that the efforts noted are sufficient to ensure the scale-up anticipated.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

7

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

MMC's application presents a chart inclusive of aspirational performance goals for these locally controlled LEAs. 100% of students by Year 2 will be learning "one year of material within one school year." This growth measure will be assessed on a value-added approach which is to be adopted. Each of the goals as stated appear ambitious as noted in the narrative (e.g. 25% reduction in achievement gaps, "a 20% increase in the available opportunity for graduation rates at each LEA").

This reviewer finds such a dramatic rise in performance, particularly in the initial year of the work, not achievable in light of the current limited use of data for improvement of teaching and learning. It is difficult to ascertain if the 2011-12 baseline data is actual or projected.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	7

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

A weighted average of growth across the six consortium districts shows that "over the last four years, the proficiency (rate) on the Missouri Assessment Program has increased by 2.2% for communication arts and by 4.25% for mathematics." No further information is provided in this section of the application concerning achievement gains.

The applicant also points to the provision of significant increases in available data, professional development and adoption of common assessments as indicators of efforts to improve teacher performance. Participating districts have also been awarded the State Improved Achievement award.

There is no mention in this section of graduation rates.

Literacy coaches and a new reading program were introduced in struggling schools in at least one district. Other particulars concerning efforts to improve conditions in low-performing schools are not included.

A parent portal to the student information system is noted. Ease of access is not discussed. School related data is reported in a variety of ways that assure interested stakeholders will find the information they are seeking.

The medium-low score in this section is reflective of a lack of clarity concerning goals and incomplete information as noted above.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)

5

4

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that "(A)ll districts included in the Missouri Mobile Mastery Consortium demonstrate a high level of transparency in LEA processes, practices and investments, including by making public by school, actual school-level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration." Stakeholders are informed of expenditures and

other fiscal matters via established public websites, routine news reporting and school board meetings and budget hearings.

A link is provided in the proposal, potentially to document the narrative statements. RTTT protocol does not encourage reviewers to peruse these links.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

10

10

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

"All LEAs in the Mobile Mastery Consortium exhibit successful conditions and sufficient autonomy under legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements in the state of Missouri to implement the personalized learning environments described in this proposal." This statement in the narrative proposal is supported by Missouri adopting the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and providing schools with a model curriculum to assist and support the implementation. The State has joined the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to provide Missouri districts with assessments aligned to the CCSS.

This alignment is clearly supportive of the consortium efforts to ensure better learning outcomes.

Additionally, the State has required establishment of an educator evaluation system. All Missouri districts are required, by 2014, to have in place an evaluation model using multiple ratings to differentiate levels of performance.

The State of MO is a local control state which supports the Consortium's ability to be flexible and autonomous as they move forward with the RTTT plans.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A committee was formed around the development of the proposal for RTTT. School leaders were at the table and input was garnered from other stakeholders. The applicant states that "(o)verwhelming approval was given by the educators to pursue this opportunity for the students." Evidence of broad involvement is anecdotal and would have been enhanced by the inclusion of meeting announcements and educator support letters, as example. The appropriate teacher's union official in the LEAs has signed off on the proposal.

The only letters of support included are from two Mayors and one Board President. The criteria to provide letters of support from key stakeholders has not been met.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

There is no narrative provided for B5.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	12
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<p>The Consortium plan for improving learning and teaching through personalizing learning for students begins with the training of teachers to adopt a new mode of delivering education. The narrative calls for a "fully supported training routine." While the narrative does explain the focus of the PD, which is around the concept of personalized learning through project-based mastery learning, the narrative does not provide information about how the training will be delivered.</p> <p>Students and teachers will be introduced, in Year 1, to a "learning collaborative" approach for purposes of creating learning maps. These maps will be inclusive of a plan and sequence for achieving college and career ready standards. Students and teachers will also encounter a variety of high quality approaches to instruction and assessment including the more rigorous use of technology in both these arenas.</p> <p>Parents, as per the rubric stem (C) (1) (a), are not mentioned in this section of the proposal. Lack of diversity in the student population is mentioned but there are no goals delineated for ensuring students "have access and exposure to diverse</p>		

cultures, etc" as per (C) (1) (a) (iv). There is little differentiation in the proposal concerning high needs students. The assumption that "personalized learning environments will facilitate and support these students needs" is not supported by the research based advice concerning Individual Learning Plans (IEP). This research frequently suggests supports beyond the academic must be brought into play. However, the narrative in this section does not appear to take that into account.

The mid-range score is reflective of incomplete information, as noted above.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
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(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Teachers and leaders will be "assigned a personal professional development coach." Engagement with coaches will be technologically facilitated. Educators will have access to a data warehouse for purposes of tracking student growth against academic standards and for planning "next steps for each student."

"Glass classrooms," videos of exceptional teaching, will be utilized as a resource for PD and is an excellent way to emulate peer observation across the LEAs involved.

The narrative states several times that leaders will receive the same type of training as teachers. This is an important piece of the process for ensuring "everyone is on the same page." However, leaders need PD focused on their specific needs and these go beyond instructional leadership. As changes are made in the system the demands on leaders call upon skills and dispositions that may need honing. The introduction of a new evaluation system poses layers of challenges beyond classroom observation for administrators. The grant activities should address this reality.

District leaders are not specifically mentioned. Here too focused attention should be included in the plan.

In this proposal section it appears that "high quality learning resources (e.g. instructional content and assessment)" as per the rubric, are synonymous with digital resources. Other content or approaches to assessment are not mentioned in this section of the narrative.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	8

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Mobile Mastery Consortium governance organized itself such that management/governance decisions always involve two of the six LEAs. These two serve as the leadership council; each member "may bring up concerns" and the group may vote on the resolution of these. The narrative is not clear concerning the membership of the leadership council. That is, if the same two districts are permanently designated as "leadership" or if the role will rotate over the term of the grant is not discussed. If the proposal is funded, executive staff will be brought on. However, there is no explanation of the governance structure once these individuals are on Board.

There is no mention of the role of the 5/6 LEA Superintendents or School Boards and their engagement in this consortium.

Currently, State policy judges seat time as opposed to demonstration of mastery to achieve course credit and grade level credit. MMC is hoping to pilot changes to this tradition. It would be helpful to this reviewer if the proposal explicated somewhat on the probability of the State's accepting this idea. In the past, if the state has been approached for waivers or pilot programs generally, explain their disposition on these requests. Without such background information this reviewer is cautious about accepting the hoped for outcome as probable.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	5
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(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

"All students, parents, and educators will have access to the relevant tools and content regardless of income " is the first statement of this section of the proposal. However, the Budget Narrative does not delineate this expenditure as it relates to parent access.

Current IT staff in each LEA will, with help from "business partners" provide needed technological support. This reviewer

raises concerns about the burgeoning requirements that will be placed on current staff. Additionally, it may be "cart before the horse" to assume newly developing partners will be able to deliver the expected assistance.

Parents are mentioned only in the sentence quoted above. Other stakeholders are not referenced in this sections as per (D) (2) (b).

The narrative is aspirational but does not seem achievable given the current context.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The primary means of evaluation, as stated in the narrative for (E) (1), is an iterative process guided by "Innovation Configuration (IC) maps which will be created "to measure progression to improvement toward implementation goals." Innovation Configuration Mapping (ICM) is a rigorous technical process and provides a good tool for continuous feedback on progress toward goals. The applicant has a good sense of how these maps can be used to inform activities going forward. However, no mention is made of involving consultants in the mapping and in the various phases that follow this initial mapping. All stages of ICM generally require expert skills to ensure valid and reliable outcomes. There is no indication in the proposal that such expertise resides in the district. Nor is there specific mention in the Budget Narrative of this evaluative effort.</p> <p>While there is mention of "making (performance indicators) public" no details are provided as to the structure for this communication outside of the professional community.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Several strategies to publicly share information will be deployed by the consortium including utilization of the six LEA websites and a proposed consortium website, and ongoing connection with local media both print and electronic. School level and district level meetings will also focus on the RTTT program. This effort, if completely implemented, will be effective.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The narrative for this section speaks <u>only</u> to the absence to date of performance measures against which to evaluate the effectiveness of educators. From this starting point the applicant anticipates achieving, by the end of four years, 100% of teachers achieving one year of expected growth for students. This does not appear realistic.</p> <p>Chart E3 - Performance Measures is incomplete.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	5
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Use of external and internal program evaluation protocols is proposed. The Innovation Configuration Maps are a good way to provide ongoing benchmarking data that is both quantitative and qualitative, presuming appropriate expertise is on hand. A cost-benefit analysis will also be undertaken.</p> <p>Evaluation plans are substantive and appropriate.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	5

(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Budget Narrative provides a brief general statement of the program goals and the notation that "long term sustainability of the efforts will be made by creating self-sustaining plans within the four years of the grant." This is not convincing to this reviewer given the lack of plans and committed funding post grant.

Funds used to support the implementation are essentially limited to the grant funds. While "the LEAs will support optional, indirect costs such as printing, supplies, or travel" there are no other matching or external funding opportunities noted.

The Budget provided suggests potential inadequacies in the budgeting projections. As example, the Curriculum and Instruction Project Budget allocates over \$1,000,000 to contractual arrangements and nothing at all to Personnel. This reviewer interprets this to mean that LEA personnel will have no responsibilities beyond their current job description that will require, minimally, interim additional compensation. For several reasons this seems unrealistic and short term at best. Ditto for the Assessment Project whose budget is approximately 6x that of curriculum and instruction and also does not provide for involvement of personnel beyond their routine duties - at least as indicated in the budget.

(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)

10

2

(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:

No part of the proposal narrative is specifically marked as F2. Reference to sustainability in this Budget Section is limited to, as noted above in F1 and repeated here, "long term sustainability of the efforts will be made by creating self-sustaining plans within the four years of the grant." This is insufficiently detailed, as are on-going costs, which accounts for the low score for this section.

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:

The Mobile Mastery Consortium (MMC) application references partnerships with business, an education technology consulting firm and a faith based organization. This reviewer found it difficult to discern, from this section of the narrative, whether these are "partnerships" defined as equal relationships or whether the business and technology "partners" are paid consultants to the project. The partners are not specified, nor are there letters of support from these entities. The following description in this section of the proposal "through this application process, partnerships with businesses have been developed" suggests moreover that these are new "partners". That these "partners" are the providers of the assessments, the professional development, and the data warehouse." leads the reader to conclude that these are contractual relationships established with potential vendors for vital project assistance.

The desired educational results are global and long term. Providing specific short term benchmarks would be helpful in establishing the credibility of the goals.

Ensuring all students are provided with school supplies is noted as an emotional support. While this is a valuable assurance, no other social, emotional or developmental supports are mentioned.

Family supports are not addressed.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium proposes to introduce and implement personalized learning through the infusion of data, professional development for educators around using technology and the acquiring of new teaching skills through a coaching process. Less completely documented is how this effort builds on core educational assurances already in place in the LEAs.

Nonetheless the proposal is focused by goals and activities that if well implemented and supported would expand student access to effective education and decrease achievement gaps.

Total	210	111
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Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1005MO-2 for Republic R3 Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The visioning of this applicant emphasized a dual approach to personalized learning and demonstrates an appropriate understanding of the reform goal of this application. The Mobile Mastery consortium consists of six different LEAs across the state of Missouri. The vision of the Consortium was expressed as "Preparing College and Career Ready students, each and every day. They supported that vision statement with an appropriate early understanding of the intent of this application-the personalized learning environment with students in more control of their learning. They arrived at a reasonable conclusion that the educator should be a co-participant in this personalized learning process.</p> <p>The explanations of the dual learning environments could have been explained in greater depth to construct a more coherent presentation of their vision for accelerating student achievement and deepening student learning. The nature of common and individual tasks could have been more fully developed to ensure the Consortium development of the personalized dimension to learning was adequately explained later in the application.</p> <p>The Consortium did not produce a coherent reform vision, and in particular, did not adequately discuss the four areas of assurance required of this application. It focused more on their vision of college and career readiness and the need for more personalized learning.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium recruited the six schools through a two tiered process that began in July 2012. It was a logical and reasonable approach to take and generated the following implementation accomplishments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A practical and logical process led to the final agreement of six schools to participate. The final six consortium members met the basic eligibility requirements. The districts and respective schools were identified. 2. The Consortium completed a table that identified the participating schools. <p>However the rationale and criteria for school selection was not adequately explained. This diminishes their ability to implement a high quality plan if it cannot be fully understood why and how schools were selected.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	8

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium presented a simple and practical developmental plan that consisted of Inputs/Outputs and Outcomes/Impacts.

1. The provide a reasonable approach to their narrative that outlines a multi-year progression of major activities of the plan.
2. The multi-year chronology highlights key steps to be taken. However there was insufficient explanation of each of the steps.

However, the Consortium is vague on how the plan can be scaled up and beyond the participating schools

The applicant did not provide sufficient information on its reform and change reflective of a high quality plan.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

8

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The likelihood that the Consortium will foster academic improvement through its annual goals is supported by the following:

1. The summative assessment growth for the four year program are adequately detailed beginning with baseline and ending four years later. Their methodology was based on Percent Proficient and above. The ESEA assessments were identified but a clear explanation of the ESEA targets was not provided.
2. The achievement goals experienced by the subgroups are also addressed. However, the goals of some of the subgroups may be overly ambitious in that going from 30 to 60 may be excessive.
3. The graduation rate already is high and so the desired 4 yr outcome ranges from 89% to 91%.
4. College enrollment is expected to rise after 4 years.

The Consortium has articulated a set of goals that for the most part are achievable, while there are may be an overreach for some.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	11
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Over the last four years, the proficiency on the Missouri Assessment Program has increased by 2.2% for communication arts and by 4.25% for mathematics.</p> <p>A clear record of success in the past four years is limited to the statement that proficiency increased by 2.2% for communication arts and by 4.25% for mathematics. With such limited information it eliminates the presentation of charts, graphs, raw data, etc.</p> <p>It is not possible to obtain a complete picture of the record of success without more detailed information.</p> <p>The narrative does not reference tables or charts to document the Consortiums reform experience with their lowest achieving schools or low performing schools. Instead the point to the award of Distinction in Performance that Consortium Districts have received over the past four years.</p> <p>That still is insufficient to demonstrate a multi- year track record.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	4
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>There is sufficient information to conclude that the Consortium is transparent with respect to all personnel and non-personnel</p>		

costs. It adheres to state requirements and publishes the information with the media		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium considers that the statutory requirements of Missouri are sufficiently flexible to allow for experimentation and innovation with the guidelines set forth.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a local control state they consider the autonomy and flexibility to be amenable for this type of reform. 2. The current state and local regulations on instruction are aligned with this RTT re.form initiative and enables the Consortium to perform autonomously. <p>The state of Missouri provides sufficient flexiblty for the Consortium to undertake the project, but the connection of that flexibility to personalized learning and new approaches to measuring teacher effectiveness were not adequately explained</p> <p>;</p>		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	8
<p>(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium provides sufficient information to indicate stakeholder support for the application.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stakeholder committees were organized and participated in the shaping of the proposal. Support was evident. 2. Although the applicant indicated staff were supportive of the application,there was limited evidence on the support of internal stakeholders such as teachers. 3. There was limited discussion on the involvement of external stakeholders who would have been informed and engaged in the development of the proposal. <p>The quality of the proposal with respect to stakeholder involvement is diminished due to the limited involvement of them.</p>		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	1
<p>(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A search in other sections provided some evidence of data describing percentages of participating high needs students and low income students and some baseline data.</p> <p>A narrative analysis of the data to document the needs and gaps was not provided</p> <p>They did not meet the elements of a high quality since there was an absence of a response for B-5.</p>		

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	14
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium initiates an early understanding of PLM learning by appropriately focusing on what personalized learning means to them and the steps to develop stakeholder wawareness of this reform model of learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They consider that changing and opening teachers minds to personalized learning was the first step. 2. Changing the mindset then was followed by an informal portrayal of what personalized learning consisted. <p>Yr 1: Introduction/training PLM and technology applications</p> <p>Yr 2: Implementation of personalized learning models.</p>		

Yr 3: First yr of complete implementation

Yr 4: Continued implementation and scale out to other districts.

However, the narrative described a general sequence of multi-year phases for the Project. While it summarized the major activities of each year in a reasonable progression of development and implementation, it overlooked some aspects that are required:

1. It did not emphasize sufficiently how learning was to be accelerated and deep learning would occur.
2. It did not address the inclusion of content that reflected cultural diversity.
3. There was no detailed mention of the alignment of PLM to the mastery of College and Career Ready standards.

The plan did not adequately describe the transformation of learning in a personalized learning environment. Nor did it fully describe how learning would be accelerated and deepened. There were outlines of activities and timelines but they were not sufficiently coherent to demonstrate their complete understanding of that transformation

This did not meet the requirements for a high quality plan!

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

14

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium provided a general overview of elements of the installation and implementation of the plan. However it did not provide a comprehensive visual framework required of a plan to ensure that all objectives, strategies and actions are implemented:

1. The information provided did address appropriately the professional development in personalized learning environments. It also emphasized a sound implementation of the personalized learning environments. It pointed to the need for improved teaching and leading in this new reform. It also emphasized the new personal learning strategies that students would be engaged in.

However, it did not explain sufficiently how frequent student progress was to be measured in this new approach.

2. The Plan provides appropriately the use of a "data warehouse" that will give teachers and students access to digitalized learning resources and performance data for feedback, improvement cycles

3. The Plan will correctly rely on the District and States teacher evaluation system to improve teacher effectiveness. Other training of personnel will also be aligned with the reform model of personalized learning environment.

Weakness: These strength statements above demonstrate that the Consortium comprehends the complex tasks ahead, however, there a more comprehensive outline of the Plan and the components and requirements would have supported a more comprehensive plan.

The plan did provide some aspects of change for instruction and leadership but it was difficult to discern a coherent plan that would encompass the new approach to learning that teachers would be engaged in and principals would supervise.

This diminished the high quality required for the proposal.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	10

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The Consortium responded appropriately to the consolidation of multiple LEA leadership of the participating Districts and produced the following results:

1. Established a leadership council with a set of decisionmaking processes.
2. Assigned two districts to manage the Project that will be transferred to a executive team upon award of the application.
3. District and school teams were established to implement site plans.

c)(d) The state of Missouri limited the authority of the Consortium regarding the earning of credit or mastery-based credit which compels the Consortium to implement a hybrid model which may not allow mastery at multiple times and multiple ways

4. The participation of students with disabilities and English language learners is not fully explained, so it cannot be

determined if they can take advantage of a full personalized learning environment.

The Consortium could not fully implement the credit aspects of the plan and therefore diminishes the quality of a personalized approach.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)

10

8

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Consortium wide access and support is a commitment, but currently it appears that member districts vary in their local capacity to offer full technological access and support.

Access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources is considered essential and the Consortium will seek to reach full access.

Technical support is to be provided by District staff

Exporting information in an open data format is recognized need along with the expectation that data can be accessed in other electronic learning systems

The Consortium has developed its understanding of interoperable data systems and continues to refine its development.

The Consortium has not fully developed the infrastructure throughout its proposed reach, including interoperability and therefore the high quality of the plan is diminished.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	13
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium provides a sound understanding of the model of continuous improvement that they advocate.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Their model consists of three cyclical components: Setting Direction, Planning Action, Taking Action, Maintaining Momentum. However the plan requires greater specificity in terms of process, structures, timelines, activities, an roles. 2. One of the keys for their model is the inputting of information that will drive the process. They have chosen the Data Warehouse of their Project to distribute timely measured information throughout the cycle. 3. They acknowledge properly that performance indicators of the Project must be monitored throughout the cycle. In a subsequent section they describe the public sharing of information as part of the feedback process. 4. They recognize that information is hard and soft which then requires different methods of analysis. <p>The continuous improvement effort needed to have been explained in a fully developed plan and therefore the plans high quality was diminished.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	4
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium elaborates a comprehensive communication plan describing the process, media and technology to be used.</p> <p>Consortium websites, local and electronic media and educational news letters will be utilized. All six sites will inform the public on implementation and results. The area of improvement noticed is the absence of specific performance or progress indicators that stakeholders need to be informed of. An educational plan for helping stakeholders to interpret the communicated data will improve the engagement.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The Consortium discuss their rationale for a value-added aspect of their measures to measure performance once a student is</p>		

assigned to a teacher. Tables were provided to demonstrate how this would be reported over time and be implemented with rigor and timeliness. The discussion did not adequately explore how the value-added factoring would result in success for the students.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

3

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The consortium explains an evaluation protocol involving 5 components. However, the explanation of those components required more detail. The primary focus of the protocol appears to be student results and professional development. There was inadequate explanation of how other aspects of the Project would be evaluated in terms of their effectiveness: technology, community partnerships, compensation, etc.

The Consortiums high quality of investment evaluation was diminished due to the lack of specificity in some of the key parts of this section.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	9
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The Consortium's budget (\$39,921,100) identifies human and material resources that it considers necessary for successful Project implementation. There are four project budgets: Administration-\$2,485,200; Curriculum and Instruction-\$1,360,000; Collaboration-\$230,700; Assessment-\$6,464,000; Professional Development-\$17,400,000. b)The budget is reasonable and sufficient for the purposes of the project. c) A description of all funds is provided. No matching funds were identified ii) Identification of funds for one time and ongoing costs are detailed. Longterm sustainability of the efforts will be made by creating self-sustaining plans within the four years of the grant. The budget is reasonable and sufficient for the projects scope and purposes.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	7
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: The Consortium identified some examples of sustainability that appear to be insufficient for the large scope of this project over multiple schools: 1. Professional development is to be transferred to the train the trainer model. 2. Technology devices can support the personalized learning model. 3. The conversion of school culture should persuade staff to keep the program alive. The Consortium intends on converting the core of the project into sustainable activities once the project ends. However the specific plan was not sufficiently described.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	6
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: The Consortium proposes partnerships with 2 external stakeholder groups: (a) Educational technology (b) Faith based group.		

1. Organized/coherent partnership: The partnership organizations were not identified by name. The explanation of the partnership was limited and therefore inadequately justified the purpose.
- a) Tracking indicators was not adequately described.
- b) Use the data to target its resources was not explained in terms of the indicators
- c) A strategy to scale the model beyond the participating students was not developed adequately
- d) Improve results over time was partially addressed in the narrative.
4. There was limited information on how the partnerships would, within participating school integrate education and other services
- 5 (a). Building staff capacity for
 - (a), Assessments of student needs would be accomplished beginning with student surveys and other related data.
 - (b), Committees would be developed to identify and inventory the needs and assets of the school and community
 - (c) The plan would engage parents and families of participating students through webportals and meetings between the partners.
 - (d) The plan proposes to implement a PDSA structure to routinely assess progress
 - (6) The identification of ambitious performance measures was not adequately developed for the cooperative efforts of the partnerships.

The diminished clarity of this project in addressing the critical elements does not reflect a high quality effort.

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met

Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:

1. The Consortium has documented the needs of their students and the presence of a significant population of High Needs students in the participating Districts.
2. The Plan provides a convincing argument that it understands the reform model of Personalized Learning environment and will take steps to integrate the PLE into the instructional repertoire. The internal and external stakeholder are aware of the potential and the challenges of creating a PLE based learning program, yet they are prepared to participate.
3. The Plan has an organized approach to the implementation of a professional development plan and the acquisition of necessary external resources to achieve that end.
4. The process of continuous improvement was considered essential for successful implementation. The application documented their model that is an appropriate structure.
5. The projected outcomes and goals for acceleration, deepening learning, graduation rate, and postsecondary education are challenging, but are ambitious and within the range of achievability.

Total	210	155
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Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)

	Available	Score
Optional Budget Supplement (Scored separately - 15 total points)	15	0
Optional Budget Supplement Reviewer Comments: There were no optional budget requests		



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #1005MO-3 for Republic R3 Schools

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	9
(A)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and concise description of a comprehensive and coherent reform vision • Applicant's conceptualization of teacher PD as parallel to individualized student learning is an excellent metaphor that is appropriate to this competition • Applicant addresses directly two of the four core assurance areas (data systems, great teachers and leaders) and indirectly one of the four (standards and assessment) in this opening description 		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	10
(A)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant provides all information required by this criterion • Applicant provides a rationale for selecting participating LEAs, participating schools (all), and participating subject (core), the latter being to ensure a focus on already-measured achievement gaps 		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	7
(A)(3) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has outlined a scale-up plan with some high-quality elements, but aspects of the plan may be limited by an adherence to linearity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ While the logic behind proposing a strictly linear model makes sense and is appealing in the abstract, such an approach may not provide enough time, given the limits of the grant period, to either adjust for unforeseen delays or to ensure adequate time to practice and develop the penultimate components (individualized student learning) before the grant expires • Applicant's logic model appears to mistake areas of focus (e.g., "professional development," which is a focal point area for reform, but not a clearly-defined, new element of the plan) for inputs, and inputs for outputs (e.g., "coaching," which in this model is more like an input—the way in which PD is manifested in this plan; the output here would be something like "ten coaching sessions per teacher per semester"); that said, the graduated outcomes represent reasonable adoption timelines/stages 		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	10
(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:		

- Though applicant's charts do not specify ESEA targets, the narrative indicates that the overall targets are for all schools to meet (and for 10% of schools to exceed) state waiver-based ESEA targets
- Overall, applicant's targets and logic behind setting these targets (for all measures) are sound and reachable
- There is some possibility that these targets may be perceived as not ambitious enough in some cases (e.g., reduction in gap size of 25%, rather than reduction by 25 percentage points), but their overall achievability outweighs this concern
- Changes in graduation and college-going rates are appropriately LEA-based, and inherent in their calculation is an understanding that progress slows as proficiency increases—an important and realistic realization

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5
(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant indicates two data points aggregated across four years and across all partner LEAs; application would be much stronger in this area with presentation of at least four years of non-aggregated data across multiple measures • Application provides anecdotal evidence of low-performing school reforms in two participating LEAs without numerical evidence of success or additional information about similar results in all partner LEAs • Data are available to parents and other stakeholders through PowerSchool and SISK12 systems, though applicant does not indicate how these portals are used to inform and improve participation, instruction, and services 		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's proposal indicates a degree of transparency in LEA expenditures that is not verifiable from the information provided in the application materials. Such transparency may indeed be available, but it was not verifiable in the materials provided. For example, with the exception of non-personnel expenditures, it is unclear from the narrative whether line items such as personnel salaries are disaggregated at the school level by position, or just reported in the aggregate. • Reliance on third-party dissemination of school expenditure information (e.g., via newspapers) suggests a degree of transparency short of full public disclosure • Other forms of information (board meeting minutes, LEA policies, etc.) appear to be more readily available 		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	10
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state provides the consortium members with the flexibility required for meeting this criterion • Applicant cites the Missouri School Improvement Plan—tailored to help school districts track their success in reaching ESEA goals—as evidence of the presence of the successful conditions necessary to ensure successful implementation of its proposed plan • The state's local control approach to public school governance provides the districts with the flexibility necessary to ensure the autonomy necessary to implement its proposed plan; the state's ESEA waiver provides additional flexibility for the consortium partners 		
(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)	10	1
(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application appears to have been crafted almost exclusively by educators within the consortium • Applicant provides only top-level information about parent involvement 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent involvement appears to have been limited to opportunities to provide feedback at one stage of the development process • Student involvement not addressed • No numerical indication of teacher support • Only minimal inclusion of letters of support 		
(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)	5	0
(B)(5) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No text 		

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	9
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, applicant's narrative for this section still remains at the level of vision and not of specifics about plan actualization • Applicant's narrative fully meets 3 of the 12 components of this criterion ((C)(1)(a)(ii), (C)(1)(b)(iv)(A), (C)(1)(b)(iv)(B)) • Applicant's narrative partially meets 5 others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ (C)(1)(a)(iii) – Learning Map concept connects learning to student interests, but there is no indication of the depth of the learning so facilitated ◦ (C)(1)(b)(i) – The Learning Map concept—already in use by one of the partner LEAs—partially addresses this sub-criterion, but more information and detailed planning is needed for the to-be-developed “App” ◦ (C)(1)(b)(ii) – Alluded to as part of teacher PD, but not specified in the narrative ◦ (C)(1)(b)(v) – Mentioned, but without provision of any details or specific goals ◦ (C)(1)(c) -- Training and support to be supplied exclusively by teachers • Four sub-criteria were not met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ (C)(1)(a)(i) – Not addressed directly in the narrative ◦ (C)(1)(a)(iv) – Not addressed directly in the narrative ◦ (C)(1)(a)(v) – Not addressed directly in the narrative ◦ (C)(1)(b)(iii) – No indication of high quality, though there is some indication of a plan to provide digital content 		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	10
(C)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As in (C)(1), applicant's narrative for this section again remains largely at the level of vision and does not provide many specifics about plan actualization • The idea of teachers learning how to prepare and support individualized learning by experiencing it for themselves as part of their professional development remains a conceptual strength of this proposal • Applicant's narrative fully meets 4 of the 10 components of this criterion ((C)(2)(a)(i), (C)(2)(b)(ii)(A), (C)(2)(c)(i), (C)(2)(c)(ii)) • Applicant's narrative partially meets 2 others: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ (C)(2)(a)(iii) – Not directly addressed, though noted in the accompanying visual schematic for teacher PD ◦ (C)(2)(b)(i) – Applicant's narrative for this sub-criterion remains at the vision level only; no substantiating concrete plans • Four sub-criteria were not met: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ (C)(2)(a)(ii) – Not addressed directly in the narrative, though the general description of the vision for PD suggests that it might be a component of that PD ◦ (C)(2)(a)(iv) – Not addressed directly in the narrative ◦ (C)(2)(b)(iii) – No direct or specific indication of how student data will be used by teachers to link appropriately-tailored resources to them ◦ (C)(2)(d) – Assurances of highly-effective teachers for students is made solely on the promise of untried PD; no indication of how teacher evaluation and student outcomes data could be used to aid in decision-making about 		

staffing and teacher placement. High-need school and high-demand subject area or specialty area effective teacher needs also to be addressed solely via proposed PD. Applicant implies that “highly qualified” is synonymous with “highly effective.”

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	11
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State law and/or local policy and local structures provide support for sub-criteria (D)(1)(a), (D)(1)(d), and (D)(1)(e) • (D)(1)(b) – By applicant’s own admission, school leadership teams have only limited autonomy within their schools • (D)(1)(c) – Local policy supports provision of opportunities for students to demonstrate mastery at multiple times and in multiple ways, but state policy does not recognize these in all cases 		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA and school infrastructure do not currently meet all of the benchmarks of this criterion, though the applicant’s plan is to address some of these sub-criteria as part of the full plan • The applicant’s plan will allow some LEA-level control of its use of technology-tied funds to accommodate for differentiated levels of technological infrastructure, in support of equitable access at the LEA level for all students; equitable access across LEAs is not guaranteed under the plan • As implied in (C)(1)(c), technical support will be the responsibility of teachers, with some hope that 3rd-party technology providers also will be able to provide technical support for all stakeholders • Exporting of data into an open format and interoperability across data platforms is left up to contracted vendors and the hope that they will modify their products to better match the API 		

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	11
(E)(1) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant has a clear philosophical and cyclical four-phase approach to its continuous improvement process • Monitoring, measuring, and publicly reporting information is scheduled for Phase III in the plan • Applicant alludes to the importance of setting concrete goals and processes, but does not delineate what these are • Plan would benefit from a clearer schedule of when these various stages will take place, as well as who will lead or direct them 		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	5
(E)(2) Reviewer Comments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications flow appropriately through the consortium manager, as well as through a shared consortium website • The presence of an external evaluator and a plan for formative assessment also strengthens this component 		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

- Though the applicant defends well the importance of considering use of a value-added measure for tracking teacher effectiveness, the remainder of the applicant's response to the sub-criteria is incomplete
- (E)(3)(a) – No rationales are provided for any proposed measures other than the to-be-created value-added measure
- (E)(3)(b) – Similarly, the applicant provides little information about how the selected measures will provide timely and rigorous leading information
- (E)(3)(c) – The narrative provides no details about how the consortium will review and improve its measures over time as necessary
- Including sub-tests (subject-area components of state tests), applicant meets the criterion for total number of measures

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

5

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

- The applicant supports plans for both internal and external evaluations, with some top-level guidance for the evaluation products to be delivered
- The plan to engage an outside evaluator is a strength, though it is not clear where that evaluation is covered in the appended budget

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	4
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment costs are appropriately up-front and non-repeating, as are contractual services, under the assumption that such contractual services are intended to be transferred to consortium personnel under the train-the-trainer approach described earlier in the narrative • Some items in the budget are in need of additional explication; namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The spike in travel in Year 2 (\$111,600 for a single three-day conference [with an additional \$80,000 in stipends], relative to \$14,500 for travel every other year); ◦ The assumptions behind the \$5/student figure for the Personalized Learning System; and ◦ Additional breakdown for the \$17 million in contractual spending for coaching; application would be stronger with more clarity around how this expense was calculated • Collaboration budget appears to have a math error in Column B of \$80,000 • No indirect cost calculations, or indication that none are necessary 		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	1
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the proposal's funding will go toward what are identified in the grant proposal as non-repeating costs, such as technology upgrade (Year 2 costs = 25% of the entire budget) and non-recursive contractual services (Year 1 & 2 = 45% of the entire budget); it is not clear, however, that the plan as constructed adequately anticipates ongoing costs associated with these components—especially for the contractual services, which make up the purchase of the personalized learning system, online classes, development of online classes, teacher coaching, and intervention resources, and which will need to be maintained and updated after initial purchase and installation—leaving in question whether sustainability after the grant is assured • Unclear how applicant intends to continue to fund the array of 3rd-party tests post-grant, for which the grant will pay over \$6 million across the first four years • Though not required, the lack of identification of additional revenue streams to support the activities of the proposal after RttT-D funding ends also casts in doubt the sustainability of the plan in out-years 		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	1
<p>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal directly or fully addresses only a few of the sub-criteria for the Competitive Preference Priority. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal does not clearly define the partners other than to describe their roles in the community, nor does the proposal provide any evidence of the partnerships described (letters of support, names of organizations, past work, etc.). Of those referenced, only the last (the faith-based partnership) appears to be directly linked to the rest of the text in this section of the proposal There is only one population-level desired result that has not already been noted by the applicant, and, while an admirable goal that fits within the intent of this criterion, is not indicative of a fully-realized partnership plan that will directly support the larger work proposed in the application The applicant mentions distribution of a survey, but that survey's linkage to the proposed activity of the partnership (distribution of school supplies) is indirect No partnership-specific, ambitious performance goals have been set (e.g., number of children served annually, types of supplies provided) There is significant weight placed on the value of the proposed activity for this partnership without much evidence to support the degree to which the proposed activity (distribution of school supplies) is known to generate the outcomes described (e.g., elimination of behavioral issues, immediate and measurable differences in academic achievement, meeting career and college benchmarks, etc.) 		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
<p>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The absolute priority is met based primarily on the strength of the vision as outlined in Section A of the applicant's proposal As noted above, the bulk of the applicant's narrative remains primarily at the vision stage rather than the actualization stage, but, though that lack of specificity and detail reduces the strength of the proposal overall, it does not lessen the degree to which the vision itself addresses Absolute Priority 1. In particular, the proposal's focus on providing personalized instruction for teachers as the first step toward providing personalized instruction for students is commendable and reflects directly and indirectly many of the aspects of Absolute Priority 1 		

Total	210	116
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